

Olive Oil

3 TYPES OF OLIVE OIL:

Extra Virgin Olive Oil (EVOO)

Virgin Olive Oil (VOO)

Olive Oil (OO)

The degree of processing determines the type.

PRIMARY ACTIVE COMPONENTS OF OLIVE OIL¹:

Monounsaturated Fatty Acids (MUFAs)

Phenolic compounds

Squalene

Olive Oil in The Mediterranean Diet

Olive oil (*Olea europaea* L.) is the primary source of fat and energy in the Mediterranean diet. Though the diet is high in fat, it is associated with longevity and a decreased risk of developing some chronic diseases². This interesting combination has led many researchers to explore the impact of olive oil on health. Current research reports that olive oil plays a role in the following:

- Improving lipid profiles (↓ total cholesterol, ↓ LDL, ↑ HDL)
- Lowering blood pressure (BP)
- Reducing oxidative DNA stress
- Lowering the risk of some cancers (colon, breast, and skin)
- Improving glucose metabolism in diabetics
- Antimicrobial effects in GI and respiratory tract infections^(1,3,7)

These conclusions lead many researchers to believe that the type of fat in one's diet may be more important than the amount of fat consumed⁴.



Olive pomace is the product yielded when olives are crushed. This can then be processed to yield different types of olive oil.

Counseling Tips for RDs

RDs may find that their clients are more likely to change the type of fat in their diet than the amount of fat. If this is the case, consider introducing olive oil. Olive oil can be used in:

- Salad dressings
- Spreads and dips
- Pasta dishes
- And even desserts

Also suggest that your clients increase fruit, vegetable, and whole grain intake for best results.



Be sure to include skill-appropriate recipes while counseling to improve adherence.

History and Uses of Olive Oil



Did you know?

“Olive oil” is the most processed type of olive oil and only contains 5-10% virgin olive oil. This largely and negatively impacts its health benefits.

Safety Precautions and Adverse Effects:

Olive oil is high in fat which is calorie-dense so it should not be consumed in excess. Other than this, no risks have been linked to intake of olive oil.



OLIVE OIL

Peak cultivation of olives occurred between the 6th and 3rd century BC in Greece. At this time, olives were considered to be at the core of economic life⁵. Olive oil was typically associated with wealth. Olives and olive oil were historically used to treat:

- Colic
 - Alopecia
 - Paralysis
 - Rheumatic pain
 - Sciatica
 - Hypertension
- Olive oil was also used as a(n):
- Aphrodisiac
 - Emollient
 - Sedative
 - Laxative
 - Tonic
 - Personal cleanser

Presently, olive oil is used in both cooked and uncooked dishes. Deep fat frying is very common¹. It is also commonly used as a moisturizer for hair and nails.

Significant Research: Olive Oil...

Lowers Blood Pressure

Increasing the MUFA/SFA ratio has shown to be effective in lowering BP. Effects were seen even clearer when olive oil was used as the main source of MUFA due to its phenolic compounds⁶.

Improves Lipid Profile

Consumption of VOO with a traditional Mediterranean Diet has proven to have an anti-inflammatory role and lipid-lowering effect on patients at high risk for cardiovascular disease⁷.

Reduces DNA Oxidation

Studies have shown that consumption of EVOO can reduce DNA oxidation. However, a recent study refuted the hypothesis that this association is due to the phenolic compounds present in EVOO.

References

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